

Press Release

November 22, 2011- For Immediate Release

Contact: Terry Maple

Office of the State Fire Marshal

785-296-3401

Thanksgiving Cooking Safety

As Kansas residents prepare their Thanksgiving Day meals, the Kansas State Fire Marshal, Terry Maple, is urging all families to practice fire safety while cooking. "These fires are preventable, and we want to keep all Kansans safe this holiday season" says Maple.

Cooking fires continue to be the most common type of fires experienced by U.S. Households and accounted for almost half of all residential fires in 2009, according to the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA). This is even more apparent during the holidays, as there is an increased report of cooking fires on Thanksgiving and Christmas.

Safe Cooking Tips Include:

- Never leave the cooking/frying unattended. If you need to leave the kitchen, turn off the stove.
- Use a timer and stay in the house if you are baking, roasting, or simmering food.
- Keep combustible items such as potholders, towels, wooden utensils, etc. away from the stovetop.
- Use well-insulated potholders or oven mitts when touching any pot or lid.
- Never allow children or pets around the stove or fryer.
- Plug cooking equipment directly into a wall outlet, not an extension cord.
- Never use water to extinguish a grease fire.

Of particular concern is the increased use in turkey fryers. Turkey fryers are becoming more and more popular due to the reduced time it takes to cook a turkey compared to conventional ovens. Unfortunately, frying is the cooking method posing the highest risk. If you are still determined to fry your turkey, here are some important tips to remember:

- Use turkey fryers outdoors, never in a garage or on a wooden deck
- Never leave the fryer unattended
- Ensure the fryer is placed on a level surface
- Keep children and pets away from the fryer to avoid burns and accidental tipping
- The turkey must be completely thawed – Oil and water do not mix and may cause an explosion
- Keep an all-purpose fire extinguisher nearby.

Protect your children from scalds and burns!

According to NFPA, children under five face a higher risk of burns associated with cooking than of being burned in a fire. Follow these safety tips to help prevent these painful injuries:

- Keep children at least 3 feet away from where food and drinks are being prepared or carried.
- Keep hot foods and liquids away from the table or countertop edges.
- Use the back burners on the stove if possible.
- Never hold a child while cooking, drinking, or carrying hot foods or liquids.

State Fire Marshal
700 SW Jackson, Suite 600
Topeka, KS 66603-3714



phone: 785-296-3401
fax: 785-296-0151
www.ksfm.ks.gov

Terry L. Maple, State Fire Marshal

Sam Brownback, Governor

Hopefully by following the above guidelines, everyone will be able to enjoy your holiday meals without any burns or fire incidents. However, just in case you do have a fire, here are some tips to remember:

- When in doubt, just get out.
- When you leave a room, be sure to close the door behind you to help contain the spread of fire.
- Call 911 or the local emergency number after you leave.
- Always keep a clear path to all exits.
- Smother grease fires with a lid kept nearby – do not use water!
- Keep the door closed in the case of an oven or microwave fire. Turn off the appliance immediately.

The employees of the Office of the State Fire Marshal would like to wish everyone a happy and fire safe holiday season.

Happy Holidays!